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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Two Hundred Years Ago and After

BY THE REV. W. J. FINCK, D. D.

It does not require two hundred years to produce great changes. Every one will acknowledge that our own generation has been privileged to witness the greatest development as plainly shown by the long chain of practical inventions the benefits of which we are now enjoying. At the Centennial Exhibition in 1876 a telephone operated between the Main Building and the Machinery Hall, two adjacent structures, was regarded the wonder of the age; today the telephone carries a message of the human voice from shore to shore. The electric light was but a dream at the same time, but the World's Fair in 1893, only seventeen years later, was flooded with the splendor of electric lights. If progress so great can be noted in one generation, how surprised the Lutheran fathers that settled in Virginia in 1717 would be to see the immense changes in agriculture, transportation, industrial arts, warfare, and the operations of the Church, that are now so common to our eyes. The tractor on the farm; the locomotive and automobile in the country and the city; the Bessemer steel works among industrial enterprises; the machine gun, the aeroplane, and the submarine in warfare; and the vast missionary and educational operations in the religious world, would surely astonish them beyond measure.

By far more difficult it would be for them to look forward from their day to ours, than it will be for us on this anniversary occasion to look back to their day. Our difficulty will lie in properly learning the lessons that this occasion should teach us; namely, to sympathize with them in their trials and troubles, to appreciate their efforts which seem so modest to us in these days of big things, and to apply an equal amount of earnestness, devotion, and self-sacrifice in the performance of our Christian duty.

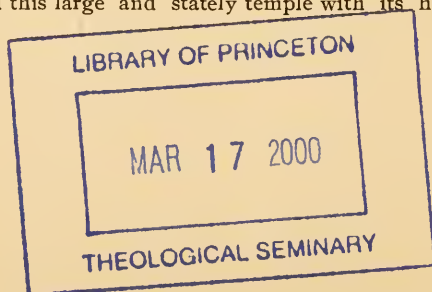
The history of the German immigrants that first touched the soil of Virginia in 1717, begins in America with eight years of subject service to pay for their transportation across the stormy sea, preceded by a voyage of many months during which they suffered all the pangs that poverty, want, hunger and disease can bring to the human frame. Bound for Pennsylvania, they were driven from their course by the storms of the sea and passing through the capes of the Chesapeake sailed up one of its arms and landed, very likely at Tappahan-

nock on the southside of the Rappahannock River. Without means to pay the charges for their transportation, they were rescued by Governor Alexander Spotswood, who paid the costs and indentured them as his servants to work for him in his iron mines for eight years.

When the time of service had been fulfilled, the Governor seemed unwilling to further them on their way to secure homes of their own, but desired to hold them, and brought suit against some of them for failure to fulfill their obligations. The court having freed those that were sued, all of these colonists took up their slight possessions and following the trail of the Indians to the westward found promising fields near the foothills of the Blue Ridge on both sides of the Robinson River. Their eyes beheld the mighty oaks and the running streams of fresh water, and they concluded that here they could find homes for their families and a place to worship God according to their faith. Their labors on this journey and in establishing new homes in the wilderness, were most arduous, and the obstacles were hard to overcome, but they realized the truth the unknown poet expresses in these lines :

“There are briers besetting every path,
That call for patient care ;
There are trials and griefs in every lot,
And a need for earnest prayer—
But a lowly heart that leans on God
Is happy everywhere.”

Eight years they labored thus together without a minister. No doubt they erected upon the elevated spot now occupied by this church a log house to serve the purposes of a school and a place of worship, as early as 1725, or 1726. But in 1738, having received financial help from Germany, they began to make preparations to build this sanctuary in which we are assembled this morning. With much labor they made by hand the nails, hinges, locks and keys, and all iron work, in their own shops. They cut and sawed all the woodwork,—sills, girders, joists, studding, beams, boards, weatherboarding, ceiling boards, frames, doors, sash, and the like,—with unceasing care and industry. We can form a better idea of the magnitude of their labors by viewing through the manhole reached from the east gallery the vaulted ceiling which at the present time is hidden by the flat ceilings that were built more than a hundred years later. With much skill and industry, faith and consecration this work was done, and a temple reared to their Father in heaven far beyond anything they had built for themselves. They lived in log houses, and their barns and stables were log structures, but to their God in heaven they dedicated this large and stately temple with its high vaulted ceilings.



When it was completed they marked the date 1740 upon the side of the girder overhead. Many of my hearers may live to celebrate the Bicentennial of the erection of this sanctuary in 1940. It deserves a worthy commemoration.

But today we are celebrating a congregational event, and not the building of the church. The people who have worshiped in this sanctuary these many years past, began their career in America two hundred years ago. It is proper therefore that we turn our attention to the history of this congregation and seek to find in its life of two hundred years a few reasons that justify the holding of this Bicentennial Celebration; or, in other words, endeavor to answer the question, What has this congregation done in its existence of two centuries to prove itself worthy of the commemoration arranged for this occasion?

IT HAS PRESERVED ITS ORGANIZATION AND ITS WORSHIP IN THE
PURE FAITH OF ITS FOUNDERS.

There can be no doubt of the nature of that faith and of the adherence of the early settlers to the Holy Scriptures and to the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Every document and writing of the first pastors clearly shows that the greatest unanimity existed among the people to establish for themselves and their children their own Lutheran Church that they had enjoyed in their homes across the waters, and when in the year 1776, Jacob Frank, their teacher and preacher sent to them from Philadelphia, expressed that faith in the new constitution he prepared, he but put in writing what had been a matter of confession with them from the beginning. He writes in Article I. : "The present regularly called teacher, and his regularly called successors, are to preach the Word of God at the appointed time on Sundays and festival days, at funerals and other solemnities, according to the foundation of the apostles and prophets and the unaltered Augsburg Confession, publicly, purely, briefly, plainly, thoroughly, and to edification."

And this faith of their fathers was preserved among them in spite of the change of language that became necessary in later years. For one hundred and fifteen years German was the language of this congregation, and the time came when English must be introduced on account of the young people who no longer understood the German to edification. In our day we have little sympathy with the old Germans that fought for the perpetuation of their mother tongue. We call them narrow and bigoted, and it is true that their opposition produced much trouble in the history of the Lutheran Church in America, and cost the Church a tremendous loss in membership; at the same time it becomes us to consider their motives and to give

them credit for what they on their part suffered in their conscientious struggle for what they felt the existence of their Church demanded.

Among the most intelligent and spiritually minded of the German Lutherans of two hundred years ago and afterwards, there was found a very pure and unselfish motive for their determination to maintain the German and exclude the English, and it is right that on an occasion like this we should note this fact and try to appreciate it. There was a deep-seated feeling in the hearts of the most earnest of the people of that day that with the loss of the German language in the congregation the true faith of their Church would come to an end, and the effort to perpetuate their language meant the preservation of the true Lutheran faith. They fought for their faith with all the powers within them, and we know many went entirely too far, but let us not forget why they acted in this way. Their fears were not ungrounded, for all around them the samples of religion couched in the English language that they saw were of the rampant, proselyting, camp-meeting order that filled their hearts with fears and doubts, alarm and horror.

The motive of others that fought just as hard was not as unselfish, but their determination to keep English out of their Church was just as strong and belligerent. They realized that the German was dying out in the homes ; that it was becoming harder and harder to maintain the German schools ; that if it were allowed to be displaced in the services of the Church, the last hold of the German language would be gone and its death certain. It follows that the thousands that were moved by this feeling joined hands with the earnest members of purer motives and increased the severity of the struggle, the one for the preservation of their faith, the other for the perpetuation of their mother tongue ; both with united and persistent forces set themselves against the introduction of the English language into the Church they had founded and built.

The struggle in the old Hebron Church was severe and long, and finally the German language was heard no more, but in spite of the length and severity of the conflict, the worship of God in the faith of the founders was preserved. In reverence let us note the changes time brought to this flock of God. "The lips that first spoke in this edifice, the ears that heard the message, the language in which it was delivered, are here no more ; but the gospel is still the same, preached in the same faith and taught according to the same Unaltered Augsburg Confession."

Let us give a moment to the consideration of the love the old fathers felt for the German language. It was the means of their thought and communication ; without it they could neither sing, nor

pray, nor read the Word of God. In it they lived, and died, and were buried, and expected to speak in heaven.

On this festive occasion the walls of this ancient temple reverberate with echoes, but they are all in the German language. From the wall to my right I hear the echo, "*Am Anfang schuf Gott Himmel und Erde,*" which is by interpretation, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." From my left I hear "*Und Gott sprach : Es werde Licht. Und es ward Licht,*" which is by interpretation, "And God said, Let there be light : and there was light." And from before me comes the glorious echo "*Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt, dass er seinen eingebornen Sohn gab, auf dass Alle, die an ihn glauben, nicht verloren werden, sondern das ewige Leben haben,*" which is by interpretation, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And from all sides I hear the harmonious strains :

*Ein' feste Burg is unser Gott,
Ein' gute Wehr und Waffen,
Er hilft uns frei aus aller Noth,
Die uns jetzt hat betroffen.
Der alt' boese Feind,
Mit Ernst ers jetzt meint,
Gross Macht und viel List
Sein grausam Ruestung ist,
Auf Erd' ist nicht seins gleichen.*

This is the great battle hymn of the Reformation used so frequently in all Lutheran congregations and found on the program for today, "A mighty Fortress is our God."

But not only in spite of the change of the language from German to English, but also in spite of the influence of all kinds of traveling preachers that repeatedly passed back and forth through the community, and in spite of the inroads made by the revivalists that held forth in those days at camp meetings, was the life of the congregation preserved. Especially detrimental to the welfare of the Lutherans were the meetings held by those who practiced immersion. The German preachers were frequently helpless at the times of these meetings held in the neighboring woods, and Old Hebron suffered many losses, but in spite of all it preserved its organization and its worship in the pure faith of its founders.

IT HAS SENT MANY OF ITS PEOPLE FAR AND WIDE TO FORM OR STRENGTHEN OTHER LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS.

Old Hebron deserves to have its history commemorated because it has not been selfish and just lived for itself. It has to its credit two

daughter congregations formed by its people living some distance from the mother church, or by a colony going forth from its number. The former is located at Criglersville, and is served to this day by the pastor of Old Hebron. The colony that went forth from its number located in Boone County, Kentucky, and in 1806 formed a congregation, that for many years was the pioneer Lutheran Church in the far west beyond the mountains. There may be other congregations that have been formed in a similar manner, as there are many near and far that have been strengthened by the addition of members coming from Old Hebron. In Anderson, Indiana, they were heard of, and the printed record of the Gaar family was there seen in the hands of a Mr. Smith, whose wife was a descendant of this name. This is doing missionary work of a practical nature, and no justification of a congregation is so strong as obedience to the Lord's command to do mission work. The congregation that is missionary has a right to live. Old Hebron for years has made its existence felt far across the mountains, and it is but fitting that we should commemorate its two hundredth anniversary in this public way.

IT HAS SENT FIVE SONS INTO THE MINISTRY.

There are not many congregations as old as this one, but there are many very old organizations that have not given a single young man of their number to the service of the Master in the vineyard. They have consumed many, and produced none. Old Hebron has given at least five men to serve as ministers. The first was William Carpenter, who after serving with his father in the Revolution, studied for the ministry under Christian Streit of Winchester, was ordained by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, gave Old Hebron twenty-six years of his earnestness and activity, after which he followed the colonists to Kentucky and served them in their Hopeful congregation for twenty years more, thus ending a long life in the Lord's service.

The second was Jacob Crigler, who, licensed by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, labored successfully in Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Ohio. After organizing two congregations in Ohio, and assisting in the organization of three synods in various parts, he retired to his farm near Florence, Kentucky, and departed this life at the age of seventy-one years.

The third was Bellfield C. Wayman. He was educated in Roanoke College and ordained by the Virginia Synod in 1870. After a service of two or three years in Virginia his health failed and he died in 1873 at the age of forty. He was faithful in his calling, patient in suffering, tender and noble in his feelings, but not spared for a long service.

The fourth was James William Strickler, whose death was memorialized at the present meeting of the Virginia Synod, fittingly in the

church of his youth. He was graduated at Roanoke College and ordained by the Southwestern Virginia Synod. Upon his ordination he offered himself for the India mission field, but he failed to pass the medical examination and devoted himself earnestly to the home work, laboring successfully in Virginia and North Carolina. His last sermon was preached three days before his death ; he passed away in his sixty-first year, November 29, 1916, at Middlebrook, Virginia, and was buried in Riverside cemetery, Waynesboro, Va.

The fifth is John F. Crigler, who is the only one of the five still living, and who is present on this occasion and appropriately assisting at these commemorative exercises. He was educated in Roanoke College, ordained in 1896, and began his ministerial labors in Luther-ville, Md., where in 1903, he married Miss Edith Norris Wolf, oldest daughter of the Rev. L. B. Wolf, D. D., President of the Board of Foreign Missions of the General Synod. Pastor Crigler is at this time the much beloved pastor of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Charlotte, N. C.

This is a noble band of men that have been sent forth from Old Hebron. When the people gather together within these ancient walls to celebrate future anniversaries, may the number be much increased to the honor of Old Hebron !

ITS PASTORS HAVE BEEN MISSIONARY PASTORS AND HAVE LABORED
FAR AND WIDE.

An impression seems to exist throughout our country that this congregation is extremely secluded, hemmed in between the Blue Ridge and the Robinson River, and that its existence has been one of isolation. This is far from the truth. Its early pastors extended their labors far beyond the immediate vicinity of the church. Their first pastor, John Caspar Stoeber, reached them only because he had the missionary spirit, laboring in Pennsylvania and extending his labors far and wide, seeking to minister to the spiritual welfare of his countrymen. His successor, George Samuel Klug, though feeling his isolation and the restrictions of the provincial government, is known to have made long journeys ; and the traditions heard in Page County of the early visits of German Lutheran ministers no doubt have their foundation in the work of this pastor of the Hebron Church.

The third pastor, John Schwarbach, was an untiring missionary. He extended his labors to a territory now embraced in Pendleton, Hardy, and Hampshire counties, West Virginia. Here he found the Henkels and other Lutherans, built a church for them, and in the year 1768, on one of his monthly visits, he confirmed a fourteen year

old boy by the name of Paul Henkel. It might be well for us to pause a moment and consider the significance of that fact. A pastor of Hebron Church on a missionary journey found and confirmed Paul Henkel! Surely, we can say, that if the Hebron congregation had done nothing more than through its pastor to discover Paul Henkel, this commemoration today would be fully justified.

Let us pause a moment longer. This is missionary work. Does missionary work pay? The facts in this case give us the answer that its pay is twofold: it pays at home, and it pays where the work is done. Years passed and William Carpenter was in training for the ministry. A man, unfit and unworthy, had been preaching at Hebron Church, but the officers were compelled to dismiss him. His name was J. W. Schmidt. Paul Henkel had been licensed by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and heard of the condition of affairs at Hebron. He came at once and preached for the congregation. Later he met Carpenter at the home of Christian Streit at Winchester and at his request he made regular monthly visits to Hebron, until Carpenter was able to take up the work. Later when the trouble arose in reference to the use of the English language and at the same time the Baptist revival camp meetings were started in the immediate neighborhood of Hebron Church, and even the pastor's uncle was carried into the ranks of the immersionists, Paul Henkel came once more to the relief of the distracted people at Carpenter's request, preached in Hoffman's chapel and in the woods the true Lutheran doctrine in the English language and stayed the inroads of the revivalists to a great extent. He also preached in German for the pastor in the Hebron Church. Strange to say Carpenter for many years was not permitted by his officers to preach in the English language and he was perfectly helpless in his efforts to combat the assaults of the enemy. Paul Henkel was free and used his freedom to the great benefit of the agitated congregation.

So we must acknowledge that missions pay. If the pastors of the Hebron Church had not had the missionary spirit, it is doubtful whether they could have preserved the existence of the congregation. The very life of a church demands that we move and labor for the welfare of others, and as we are the means of giving life to others we ourselves live and grow.

Three noble men come together in the history of the Lutheran Church in America at this time, a trio of American native born pastors—Christian Streit, Paul Henkel, and William Carpenter. Each one in his way helped to make Hebron Church a perpetual monument of usefulness. They did not fail, and it is right that we should at this time commemorate their unselfish deeds and appreciate them as

among the number that gave Hebron Church a noble and enduring history.

And many others of the pastors of the Hebron congregation labored successfully here in this field. Time is not allowed us to follow them in their work and to show how they did their part. Read their story in the excellent "History of the Hebron Lutheran Church" so ably written by your pastor, the Rev. W. P. Huddle, in the year 1907. Every member of this congregation, and every descendant of the early immigrants that settled on the Robinson River in 1725, should possess a copy, and manifest so much interest in his work that the author will be enabled to issue a second and enlarged edition, adding to the present work the valuable information and documents that he has gathered since the time of the publication of his book.

It must suffice by way of summary to state the three great factors of this commemoration. There is first the wonderful preservation of this sanctuary, with its sacramental vessels, and the organ that is still sending forth its melodious tones after leading the praises of the people for one hundred and fifteen years. Greater than this to be commemorated today is the remarkable perpetuation of the true Lutheran faith over a space of two centuries, in spite of all the difficulties that have been enumerated. Above all we must commemorate with unbounded gratitude that which is greater than either of these two factors; namely, the wonderful love and providence of God to whom we owe the preservation of the sanctuary and the perpetuation of the true faith of the founders. He that ordains that mighty oaks from little acorns grow in the kingdom of nature, preserves the places of worship in the kingdom of grace by his almighty hand. By his Holy Spirit he preserves and perpetuates the truth in the hearts of his children that he may never be without a witness among the children of men. To him therefore be all glory and honor, who hath done such wonderful things in the sight of men.

And now have we learned the great lessons of this celebration? Do we have more sympathy for these sturdy workers of the early times, and do we appreciate what they did in laying the foundation stones of Lutheran history and faith in America? Are we willing to work as earnestly and sacrifice as deeply for our Church as they did? Our opportunities are much greater and our means far superior, can we not manifest an equal devotion and loyalty?

What a legacy of faith, love, and steadfastness has been received by the members of this church and the descendants of these Lutheran immigrants! What will you do in regard to it? Will you appreciate it and use it conscientiously to your own salvation and the salvation of the world? Do not sit in ease and use your inheritance selfishly,

but use it lovingly for the good of others. Learn to serve your Master with heart and soul and give yourself and your means for his kingdom and for his service.

We love the venerable house
Our fathers built to God ;
In heaven are kept their grateful vows,
Their dust endears the sod.

From humble tenements around
Came up the pensive train,
And in the church a blessing found,
Which filled their homes again.

They live with God, their homes are dust ;
But here their children pray,
And in this fleeting lifetime trust
To find the narrow way.

—*Emerson.*

Laying the Foundation and Building Thereon

BY THE REV. H. E. JACOBS, D. D., LL. D., S. T. D.

Dean of the Lutheran Theological Seminary

MT. AIRY, PHILADELPHIA, PENNA.

The band of immigrants, who, two hundred years ago, founded this congregation, knew little of the office they were filling in the building up of God's kingdom on earth. With an all-wise Architect forming the plans and supervising the details, a great edifice is carried to completion, as each in his sphere performs his allotted task, ignorant though he may be of the ultimate result of his labors on earth.

Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, from Whom are all things, came the discovery of America, the commotions among the nations, the movements of races, the emigration to these shores, and the preparation, through long providential agencies, on both sides of the ocean, of the various elements which have entered into the citizenship of this land.

We have here to deal, not merely with external and material, but especially with inner and spiritual forces and principles.

No one has ever claimed that the founders of this congregation left their homes in the Old World, as foreign missionaries, to convert the aborigines of America to Christianity, or to evangelize the crowds of rough adventurers who, like ocean drift, are carried forward to the frontiers of civilization.

A missionary motive cannot be claimed for any emigration of that period, even though the suggestion was made in the plan for the Swedish colony on the Delaware.

The motives which, for fully a century, had impelled thousands of deeply religious people to seek a home here, were not of a specifically missionary character. Passing by the Dutch and Swedish colonies, with their commercial ambitions, it is safe to assert that a very large proportion of both English and German immigrants, fled hither from oppressions which affected not only their temporal, but also their spiritual interests. Whether the persecutions from which they had suffered had a professed religious, or nothing but a secular end, they were thoroughly disheartened, and the more enterprising among them gladly turned their backs forever from the turmoil of the old world, where they were liable at any moment to suffer from the demands of monarchs, whose rule was unlimited by constitutional restrictions and whose motto was, "I am the State."

For a few years, the anxieties of war may, indeed, be endured ; but, when, with waves of conquest, advancing and receding for generations, like the sweep of a pendulum, on the border land of their country, leaving scarcely a respite from crushing taxes and sickening apprehensions, with their fields and vineyards desolated, and their sons given to the sword, and all to no purpose—the hope of better things in their home land vanished, while the revival of religious life stimulated their desire for a refuge in the wilderness, where they might prepare in peace and quietness for their eternal home. Pastor Justus Falckner, the first Lutheran pastor ordained in America—from 1703, in charge of the Dutch Lutheran Church in New York city, in accordance with his custom of entering on the church register a brief prayer, under the record of each baptism, clearly reveals this feeling in one of these entries. In a beautiful collect, he spiritualizes the fact of the birth on the ocean of children of these immigrants : “Almighty God, Who, by Thy wondrous power, hast so ordered it, that these children were born upon the great and dreadful ocean ; lead them, by Thy grace, through the tempestuous sea of this world, that at last they may all arrive at the haven of the New Jerusalem, where all tyranny shall have an end.”

And so, they went forth, not knowing whither they went, braving the less formidable terrors of the ocean, some to New York, some to the Carolinas, some to Pennsylvania, and your forefathers to Virginia, only to wrestle with new difficulties, to meet new trials, to be imposed upon by new oppressors, and to learn the lesson, that ideal conditions are not to be realized in any earthly country, and that, whether in Europe or America, “we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”

But who has read of any regret which your fathers expressed for the change which they had made? With courage and hope, they faced their new tasks. In the land which they entered, they found a hearing and relief for their grievances, such as they had not hitherto known. The nature of the reports which they sent back to their old home, may be inferred from the speedy reenforcement they received from former friends and neighbors. They identified themselves and all their interests with the land of their adoption, and bore, with a willing heart, their share of its responsibilities. They stood as the pickets of civilization in its westward march, and interposed themselves as a wall to protect from French and Indians the settlements on the Atlantic coast. Sons of this congregation, among them, two, who afterwards became ministers of the Gospel, did loyal service in the earlier wars of this country. Nor in the years that have followed, have trans-Atlantic ideals ever received hearty sympathy among a

people, who, by long experience, know what American citizenship means. There is much meaning in the motto which the Rev. William Carpenter, a son of this congregation, and for over a quarter of a century its pastor, and in his boyhood a Revolutionary soldier, was wont to write in the accessions to his library: "*Ubi libertas, ibi patria,*" "Wherever there is liberty, there is my country."

More important, still, are the evidences of the religious character of the people of this colony. In the history of this congregation, so well portrayed by your present pastor, we have an epitome of the experience of the Church in all ages. The Word that is spoken is never lost. The confession that is made is never fruitless. The life that is planted, never entirely expires. But the path of the Church, on this earth, is in alternate light and shade; and every step forward is won at the expense of patient waiting and arduous struggle.

No mother Church, in their native land, no organized churches in the earlier settlements, sent missionaries and evangelists, to establish among them a missionary congregation. This congregation is no monument to Home Missionary agencies. Whatever attention was bestowed upon them, came from individual preachers, the irregularities of whose ministry were justified only by the pressing character of the emergency. What must the people not have suffered for half a generation, during the sixteen years they were without a pastor!

And, yet, thrown upon their own resources, and impelled by the necessities of their spiritual life, their prayers were answered, their patient efforts rewarded, and a ministry established here, not only for the congregation itself, but to be shared with those wandering as sheep without a shepherd, on the other side of the Blue Ridge.

Nor are we to overlook the positive and decidedly Lutheran character of the congregation in its earliest years. While in the first settlement at Germanna, they gratefully availed themselves of the spiritual privileges offered them by their Reformed neighbors, the relation thus formed was never regarded otherwise than merely temporary. Surely the inducements were strong, which might have led these humble people to have been satisfied with these provisional arrangements; for both Lutheran and Reformed were in a strange land, and spake the same foreign tongue. But appreciative as those who have caught the spirit of the Lutheran Church are, of the Gospel of Christ, wherever or by whomsoever preached, they cannot regard with indifference any portion of God's Word, which they have learned to prize, or the modes of administration, whose use has been attended with signal blessing. The hymns, the prayers, the devotional books, the catechism, the observance of the church year with its appointed lessons, above all, the clear, direct, explicit individualization of the

promise of the Gospel concerning the forgiveness of sins and God's favor, in the teaching of the Lutheran Church concerning the sacraments, have been found in their experience so precious, that, without them, they are not at home. The provision made in this church in its earliest year (1727) for proper communion vessels, the care taken for their preservation during the civil war, and the installation of a pipe organ of an excellence unusual in a rural community, of the times which we reckon today as primitive, as related in the excellent history of Pastor Huddle, are external marks of the regard which your predecessors had for the usages of their fathers.

Nor must we pass by the bond of fellowship maintained with their brethren of the Lutheran Church, both in Europe and in other portions of our country. The commissions sent for financial aid made their chief appeal at Lutheran centers. The headquarters of Pastor Stoever, while on his errand, were in the home of his near relative, John Philip Fresenius, a name greatly revered to the present day, for staunch adherence to the Lutheran Confessions, and his deeply spiritual interpretation of the Lutheran faith in intensely practical sermons and other devotional literature. When your colonial government exacted a tax upon your people, to sustain the Church of England in their midst, and cut off from the Lutheran Church just sources of revenue, the aid obtained from the Lutheran Church abroad enabled your congregation to maintain its Lutheran independence.

Very soon, too, after the formation of the first Lutheran Synod in America, your second pastor (Klug) turned for moral support to his brethren in the North. The Halle Reports narrate his visit to Philadelphia in June, 1749, and his expressions of the delight and comfort he received by fellowship with ministerial brethren after his entire isolation for a long time in the wilderness. For over half a century the names of this congregation and its pastors were on the roll of the synod, founded by Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, known then as the Lutheran Ministerium of North America. From this source after the death of Pastor Klug, this congregation was, for years, provided with both temporary and permanent pastors, and by it both Pastors Carpenter and Meyerheffer received their ordination. The distance, but still more the undeveloped condition of the country, interfered with regularity of representation. Ninety-seven years have passed since your last representatives sat in the sessions of the Mother Synod.

This Hebron congregation is not simply a unit, which, when combined with other congregations, constitutes the Christian Church of the world, or with other Lutheran congregations, the Lutheran Church of America, as Virginia is a State which, with others, constitutes the United States. In the strictest sense, the Church is not formed by the

union of congregations or of synods ; for the Church is not many, but the One Body of Christ, which, indeed, becomes apparent here and there on earth, but which underlies and supports all that is seen and localized. It is like a river fed from remote mountain-heads, which sends up springs from beneath the surface, as it pursues its course ; or like the one vein of precious metal, which crops out at certain points, although the connecting line may not be traceable. As in Apostolic days, the Church at Jerusalem, at Rome, at Antioch, etc., were the one Church of Christ visualized in these ancient cities, so in this congregation, we find the one Church, diffused throughout all lands and ages, and made known at this spot through the common confession made and the sacraments administered.

Religious life is diffusive, and like light and heat cannot be confined. There are no mountains so high that it will not overleap ; no barriers can be sunk so deep, that it will not pass beneath. Receptive on the one hand, it seeks on the other, to impart through ever widening circles what it receives.

The Church here planted was a true communion of saints, drawing its ministers from without, and sending others forth from its own midst, to preach the Gospel to those beyond. Even when one was raised up from your own midst, to serve the congregation in which he was born, baptized, and confirmed, he was prepared for his office outside of this parish. Then, when, over a century ago, some of your people went forth to seek new homes in the great west, your pastor followed them, to lay the foundation of Home Missionary work in a new State, where he established new centers of influence, whence to transmit to still other States the faith, in which, in this secluded retreat, he had been reared. But before leaving this spot, he had instructed your parochial school teacher, George Daniel Flohr, as a candidate for the ministry, who, after licensure by the Mother Synod, became the pioneer of our Church in Southwestern Virginia.

This, then, is a far more than a local celebration. We are commemorating the triumphs of divine grace in the entire Church as illustrated by what has transpired here. Here, as elsewhere, there have doubtless been errors committed, opportunities neglected, advantages lost, but God's grace has prevailed over and beyond man's weakness.

The very circumstances that turned the tide of German immigration away from the South, thus checking the rapid growth within it of the Lutheran Church, enabled your people at an earlier period than in some other sections of the Church to appreciate the importance of its prompt Americanization, and the inner development of its capabilities. The Synod of Virginia here convened, illustrates this in

still higher measure. Like this congregation, it has developed apart from the main lines of our country's commerce and trade. It has stood, I infer, for two great principles ; first, that the Lutheran faith is a trust which cannot be surrendered, but must be confessed and maintained at all hazards ; and, secondly, that, for such purpose, the language of the land must become the language of the Church, educational institutions must be established on solid foundations, and a new literature arise as the witness of our faith.

Humble though the efforts made have been, they have been fruitful not only on Southern soil, but in all other portions of the country, whither your sons have gone. For no external boundaries have ever been able to separate the Church North from the Church South, or the life of the one section from that of the other. On paper, they may be recorded as separate churches, but so far as their inner existence is concerned, they are one and the same Church, having the same faith, sustained by the same hopes, impelled by the same love, assailed by the same foes, aided by the same allies, wrestling with the same problems, employing the same means administered by the same methods, guided by the same standards. We preach the same Word, confess the same Faith, and administer the same Sacraments. Where the marks of the Church are the same we are one and the same Church. We are reproved by the same Law, comforted by the same Gospel, admitted to the same covenant by means of the same Baptism, and assured of the same Everlasting Life in the same Holy Supper. As there are no mountain ranges so high or rivers so broad and deep as to exclude the currents of our nation's life, much less can they bar out the movements which come from God's Spirit. There is not one particular type of Christianity or Lutheranism best adapted for the thirty-eighth, and another for the fortieth, degree of north latitude. Mason and Dixon's Line ran right through the farm of my ancestors ; and yet, I have never heard that they found it needful to treat the crops on the Pennsylvania, differently from those on the Maryland side, or that when harvested the grain was carefully separated according to the political divisions of the country. Neither North, nor South, nor East, nor West, either can or has ever, for any long time, stood absolutely alone. They are mutually interdependent. The North has drawn upon the South for many of its most influential leaders ; and, in many important crises of congregations and institutions, the South has in like manner looked to the North. The ideal is not worthy of being cherished, of a time, when each portion of the Church will be sufficient for itself, and that in the North there shall be no successors of the Krauths, the Schmuckers, the Storks, the Harkeys, no Strobel, no Seiss, no Greenwald, no Re-

pass from the South ; and, in the South, no successors from the North, of a Peter Muhlenberg, a Christian Streit, a Gottlieb Schober, a John Bachman, an Ernest L. Hazelius, a D. M. Gilbert, an E. T. Horn, or an A. G. Voigt.

Lines there are which, under peculiar conditions, had once to be observed, but which, in the face of new issues, have less significance ; and happy are we, both North and South, if we can adjust ourselves to changes in progress, and, amidst them all, adhere with steadfast devotion to our common faith which never changes.

Every church communion, like every individual, has its own peculiar calling to fulfill. So it is with every age and every generation of the Church. Some of the burdens borne by our fathers still rest upon us ; but relieved of other responsibilities that rested on their shoulders, there are, instead of them, new tasks to tax our energies. The religion of the Patriarchs, however true, assumed new forms as time advanced. Apostolic Christianity did not remain permanently confined to limits observed when the Apostles, even with Pentecostal zeal, went forth to convert the world to Christ. Long established precedents, while not abruptly broken, had to give way before the new life implanted by Him who said, "Behold, I make all things new." The old was exchanged for the new, not because the former was old, but because the new is contained in the old, and must grow out of it, if the past is to live in the future.

The pioneer work of the Lutheran Church in America is over. The isolation of our country from other countries can no longer be maintained. The period is likewise over for the detachment of any single congregation or synod or so-called general body from other congregations, synods, and so-called general bodies, provided they have the same faith and confession and be the same Church manifesting itself at different places and under varying conditions. Our Lutheran Church in America cannot be separated from the Lutheran Church of other nations, nor the Holy Christian Church among us, from the Holy Christian Church throughout all the world.

Our path is not self-chosen. Our fathers made experiments according to their light and opportunities, with results for which we cannot be too grateful. But we must build on the foundation which they laid, or their work will be forgotten.

For our Church in America, this is a critical moment. We are at a turning point in the history of the entire world. While convinced that it is a decisive hour, we are in perplexity as to the end towards which the commotion and horrors daily transpiring, are tending.

It is not religion, but the lack of religion ; not the faith of the Reformation, but the lack of this faith ; not, in any sense, Lutheran-

ism, but the purely secular spirit and purely material standards which have precipitated the crisis ; not zeal for the kingdom of God—a spiritual kingdom, dwelling in the hearts of men, and coming not with observation, but the revival of the ideals of the Alexanders and Caesars and Napoleons, that is responsible for what we have been hearing with anguished hearts for the last three years.

In the face of the most serious departures from the Lutheran faith, especially in the land, where it had its first triumphs—although not exclusively there—the call comes to us, in common with all elsewhere still true to what our name means, to turn away from the critical spirit of modern times, and to declare once more with all clearness and force the Gospel for a bleeding and dying world. From the speculations of dreamers who substitute philosophy for religion ; from the intolerance of modern liberalism, which would test even the Word of God, according to its various hypotheses concerning the universe ; it belongs to us in an intensely practical country, to confess and expound that truth which, in all ages, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

When the nation is summoning recruits to swell a mighty army, shall not our Church call an unprecedented number of men into the ministry, and provide for their thorough equipment? And shall not our families freely give us of their sons who escape from these dread crises, for the war which brings no physical harm, but diffuses peace on earth and relief from all earth's pains? Should there not be a mustering of hosts wherever the Church is planted, and a new alignment of forces and revision of methods commensurate with the greatness of the issues and the vastness of the field? Shall we be content merely to provide for the perpetuation of congregations and their gradual growth on lines fixed generations ago, or shall not the trumpet sound for a signal advance such as has never before been attempted? Shall not allies be welcomed to our side who have heretofore stood aloof, and shall we not be willing to sacrifice everything but the truth itself, that misunderstandings may be removed, and that we all shall unite as one body of believers, pressing forward for the victory which God has promised?

For this reason we hail with joy the vision of The United Lutheran Church in America ; not that it is to be a Church without a struggle—for it is the Church's perpetual lot on earth to be militant—or with the expectation that all of our ideals, or any of them will be speedily realized, but that, each element embraced contributing its own distinctive features to the common cause, we may lay the foundation for greater things in the future than those we enjoy today.

For to the end of time, the Church, if it is to fulfill its mission on

earth, must be a nursery, in which to rear the feeble and train them for vigorous manhood. It must be a hospital, which is not meant to exclude those unable to meet the test of a rigid medical examination, but which is established for the purpose of gathering within itself the sick and injured and restoring them to health. It is a reformatory, whose inmates have all of them weaknesses, that must be borne and dealt with, as each case, with its peculiar experience, requires. The Church is no aristocracy of historical antecedents or culture, or of intellectual or spiritual attainments, but the people of God of every rank and condition in life, and every degree of convalescence from the dire disease with which all are born, ready to share every advantage possessed and every benefit enjoyed with every man and woman and child for whom Christ died. It reaches its divine ideal only when, like Christ, it gives to others all that it has; and, yet, in giving is itself enriched.

The United Lutheran Church of America should be organized, not on national, but on international lines. As the Lutheran Church is of many nationalities, the Lutheran's loyalty to his church will bind together diverse nations, and train them to supranational ideals and modes of thought.

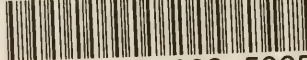
Rising above all national standards, the United Lutheran Church must make its sole claim for existence upon its fidelity to the Gospel. Its teaching must be positive, and not a mass of negations. What the heart craves is clear and definite assertions of religious truth—no mere guesses at truth, but the promises of Jesus Christ which are yea and amen forever. An agonizing conscience can never be satisfied with glittering generalities.

We are looking for a United Lutheran Church, which will not spend its main strength in criticism, but in constructive efforts; that will not pull down except to build up.

We are looking for what may in a certain sense be called a democratic church; *i. e.*, one composed chiefly, not of ministers and theologians, of ecclesiastical agents and ecclesiastical diplomats, but composed of the people, administered under God by the people, and directing all its activities towards fitting the people for God's service here and heirship in heaven.

The United Lutheran Church should be historical in its temper, cherishing every truth confessed in the past as a precious possession, and at the same time progressive; observant of precedents, and yet not mechanically bound by them, full of the freedom of the Reformation period, because its foundations are sure and its truth is many-sided, and its capabilities of development are exhaustless. Its sympathies will be wide, and its aspirations high as the heavens are raised above the earth.

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